

COUNTRY DATA: RUSSIA: Information from the CIA World Factbook

INTRODUCTION

Founded in the 12th century, the Principality of Muscovy, was able to emerge from over 200 years of Mongol domination (13th-15th centuries) and to gradually conquer and absorb surrounding principalities. In the early 17th century, a new Romanov Dynasty continued this policy of expansion across Siberia to the Pacific. Under PETER I (ruled 1682-1725), hegemony was extended to the Baltic Sea and the country was renamed the Russian Empire. During the 19th century, more territorial acquisitions were made in Europe and Asia. Defeat in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-05 contributed to the Revolution of 1905, which resulted in the formation of a parliament and other reforms. Repeated devastating defeats of the Russian army in World War I led to widespread rioting in the major cities of the Russian Empire and to the overthrow in 1917 of the imperial household. The Communists under Vladimir LENIN seized power soon after and formed the USSR. The brutal rule of Iosif STALIN (1928-53) strengthened Communist rule and Russian dominance of the Soviet Union at a cost of tens of millions of lives. The Soviet economy and society stagnated in the following decades until General Secretary Mikhail GORBACHEV (1985-91) introduced glasnost (openness) and perestroika (restructuring) in an attempt to modernize Communism, but his initiatives inadvertently released forces that by December 1991 splintered the USSR into Russia and 14 other independent republics. Since then, Russia has shifted its post-Soviet democratic ambitions in favor of a centralized semi-authoritarian state whose legitimacy is buttressed, in part, by carefully managed national elections, former President PUTIN's genuine popularity, and the prudent management of Russia's windfall energy wealth. Russia has severely disabled a Chechen rebel movement, although violence still occurs throughout the North Caucasus.

GEOGRAPHY

Location	Northern Asia (the area west of the Urals is considered part of Europe), bordering the Arctic Ocean, between Europe and the North Pacific Ocean.
Area	17,098,242 sq km
Climate	Ranges from steppes in the south through humid continental in much of European Russia; subarctic in Siberia to tundra climate in the polar north; winters vary from cool along Black Sea coast to frigid in Siberia; summers vary from warm in the steppes to cool along Arctic coast.
Natural Resources	Wide natural resource base including major deposits of oil, natural gas, coal, and many strategic minerals, reserves of rare earth elements, timber. <i>Note:</i> formidable obstacles of climate, terrain, and distance hinder exploitation of natural resources.
Total Renewable Water Resources	4,498 cu km (1997)
Freshwater Withdrawal	76.68 cu km/yr (19%/63%/18%)
Natural Hazards	Permafrost over much of Siberia is a major impediment to development; volcanic activity in the Kuril Islands; volcanoes and earthquakes on the Kamchatka Peninsula; spring floods and summer/autumn forest fires throughout Siberia and parts of European Russia. Volcanism: Russia experiences significant volcanic activity on the Kamchatka Peninsula and Kuril

	Islands; the peninsula alone is home to some 29 historically active volcanoes, with dozens more in the Kuril Islands; Kliuchevskoi (elev. 4,835 m, 15,863 ft), which erupted in 2007 and 2010, is Kamchatka's most active volcano; Avachinsky and Koryaksky volcanoes, which pose a threat to the city of Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy, have been deemed "Decade Volcanoes" by the International Association of Volcanology and Chemistry of the Earth's Interior, worthy of study due to their explosive history and close proximity to human populations; other notable historically active volcanoes include Bezymianny, Chikurachki, Ebeko, Gorely, Grozny, Karymsky, Ketoi, Kronotsky, Ksudach, Medvezhia, Mutnovsky, Sarychev Peak, Shiveluch, Tiatia, Tolbachik, and Zheltovsky.
Environmental Issues	Air pollution from heavy industry, emissions of coal-fired electric plants, and transportation in major cities; industrial, municipal, and agricultural pollution of inland waterways and seacoasts; deforestation; soil erosion; soil contamination from improper application of agricultural chemicals; scattered areas of sometimes intense radioactive contamination; groundwater contamination from toxic waste; urban solid waste management; abandoned stocks of obsolete pesticides.
PEOPLE	
Population	139,390,205 (July 2010 est.)
Ethnic Groups	Russian 79.8%, Tatar 3.8%, Ukrainian 2%, Bashkir 1.2%, Chuvash 1.1%, other or unspecified 12.1% (2002 census).
Religions	Russian Orthodox 15-20%, Muslim 10-15%, other Christian 2% (2006 est.). Note: estimates are of practicing worshipers; Russia has large populations of non-practicing believers and non-believers, a legacy of over seven decades of Soviet rule.
Languages	Russian (official), many minority languages.
Literacy Rate	99.4%
Major Infectious Diseases	Degree of risk: intermediate Food or waterborne diseases: bacterial diarrhea Vectorborne disease: tickborne encephalitis Note: highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza has been identified in this country; it poses a negligible risk with extremely rare cases possible among US citizens who have close contact with birds (2009). HIV/AIDS – adult prevalence rate: 1.1% (2007 est.)
GOVERNMENT	
Type	Federation
Independence	24 August 1991 (from the Soviet Union).
Constitution	Adopted 12 December 1993.
Legal System	Based on civil law system; judicial review of legislative acts; has not accepted compulsory International Court of Justice jurisdiction.
ECONOMY	
Agricultural Products	Grain, sugar beets, sunflower seed, vegetables, fruits; beef, milk.
Industries	Complete range of mining and extractive industries producing coal, oil, gas, chemicals, and metals; all forms of machine building from rolling mills to high-performance aircraft and space vehicles; defense industries including radar, missile production, and advanced electronic

	components, shipbuilding; road and rail transportation equipment; communications equipment; agricultural machinery, tractors, and construction equipment; electric power generating and transmitting equipment; medical and scientific instruments; consumer durables, textiles, foodstuffs, handicrafts.
Import commodities	Vehicles, machinery and equipment, plastics, medicines, iron and steel, consumer goods, meat, fruits and nuts, semifinished metal products.
Import Partners	Germany 14.39%, China 13.98%, Ukraine 5.48%, Italy 4.84%, US 4.46% (2009).
Export Commodities	Petroleum and petroleum products, natural gas, grain, wood and wood products, metals, chemicals, and a wide variety of civilian and military manufactures.
Export Partners	Netherlands 10.62%, Italy 6.46%, Germany 6.24%, China 5.69%, Turkey 4.3%, Ukraine 4.01% (2009).
Per Capita GDP	\$15,100 (2009 est.)
Population below poverty line	15.8% (November 2007)

*CITATIONS: All information included above is extracted from the CIA World Factbook except where noted.